

ROMANIZATION SYSTEM FOR AMHARIC

BGN/PCGN 1967 System

The BGN/PCGN system for Amharic was designed for use in romanizing names written in Amharic characters. The Roman letters and letter combinations shown as equivalents to the Amharic characters reflect modern Amharic pronunciation. Different consonant characters in three groups are pronounced alike in modern Amharic and are therefore romanized identically for use in geographic names.

BASIC CHARACTERS

	1st order	2nd order	3rd order	4th order	5th order	6th order ¹	7th order
1 ²	ሀ አ	ሁ ን	ሮ የ	ሬ ሏ	ሮ ዓ	ሁ ይ	ሁ ይ
2	ለ ላ	ሉ ለ	ል ሌ	ላ ለ	ል ላ	ለ ለ	ሉ ለ
3 ²	ሐ አ	ዑ ን	ወ የ	ወ ሏ	ወ ዓ	ሐ ይ	ወ ይ
4	መ ሚ	ሙ ሚ	ማ ሚ	ማ ሏ	ማ ዓ	መ ሚ	ማ ሚ
5 ²	ሰ ማ	ሱ ማ	ሸ ማ	ሸ ሏ	ሸ ዓ	ሰ ማ	ሸ ማ
6	ሩ ራ	ሩ ሪ	ሩ ሌ	ሩ ለ	ሩ ዓ	ሩ ለ	ሩ ዓ
7 ²	ሰ ማ	ሱ ማ	ሸ ሌ	ሸ ለ	ሸ ዓ	ሰ ማ	ሸ ሌ
8	ሻ ል	ሻ ሔ	ሻ ሌ	ሻ ለ	ሻ ዓ	ሻ ሌ	ሻ ዓ
9 ³	ቁ ቀ	ቁ ቁ	ቁ ቌ	ቁ ቈ	ቁ ዓ	ቁ ቀ	ቁ ቌ
10	በ ቃ	ቡ ቃ	ቢ ቃ	ባ ቃ	በ ዓ	በ ቃ	ቦ ቃ
11	ተ ቃ	ቱ ቃ	ተ ቌ	ታ ቃ	ተ ዓ	ተ ቃ	ቶ ቃ
12	ቁ ቀ	ቁ ቁ	ቁ ቌ	ቁ ቈ	ቁ ዓ	ቁ ቀ	ቁ ቌ
13 ²	ኩ አ	ኩ ን	ኩ የ	ኩ ሏ	ኩ ዓ	ኩ ይ	ኩ ይ
14	ኩ ማ	ኩ ማ	ኩ ሌ	ኩ ለ	ኩ ዓ	ኩ ሌ	ኩ ዓ
15	ኩ ል	ኩ ሔ	ኩ ሌ	ኩ ለ	ኩ ዓ	ኩ ሌ	ኩ ዓ
16 ⁴	ኩ አ,’ኩ	ኩ ን,’ኩ	ኩ የ,’ኩ	ኩ ሏ,’ኩ	ኩ ዓ,’ኩ	ኩ አ,’ኩ or not Romanized	ኩ ዓ,’ኩ
17	ኩ ቃ	ኩ ቁ	ኩ ቌ	ኩ ለ	ኩ ዓ	ኩ ቃ	ኩ ዓ
18 ²	ኩ ል	ኩ ሔ	ኩ የ	ኩ ለ	ኩ ዓ	ኩ ል	ኩ ዓ

	1 st order	2 nd order	3 rd order	4 th order	5 th order	6 th order ¹	7 th order
19	ø we	ø. wu	ɸ wī	ɸ wa	ɸ wē	ɸ. w, wi	ɸ wo
20	o 'ā	o. 'u	q. 'ī	q. 'a	q. 'ē	b. 'i	ɸ 'o
21	ll ze	ll. zu	ll. zi	l za	l zē	ll z, zi	ll zo
22	γf zhe	γf zhu	γf zhi	γf zha	γf zhē	χf zh, zhi	γf zho
23	ɸ ye ⁵	ɸ. yu	ɸ. yi	ɸ ya	ɸ. yē	ɸ y, yi	ɸ yo
24	ɻ de	ɻ. du	ɻ. dī	ɻ da	ɻ. dē	ɻ d, di	ɻ do
25	χ je	χ. ju	χ. jī	χ ja	χ. jē	χ j, ji	χ jo
26	ɾ ge	ɾ gu	ɾ gī	ɾ ga	ɾ gē	ɾ g, gi	ɾ go
27	m t'e	m. t'u	m. tī	m t'a	m. tē	τ t', t'i	m t'o
28	mb ch'e	mb ch'u	mb ch'ī	mb ch'a	mb ch'ē	τb ch', ch'i	τb ch'o
29	χ p'e	χ. p'u	χ. pī	χ p'a	χ. pē	χ p' p'i	χ p'o
30 ²	χ ts'e	χ. ts'u	χ. tsī	χ ts'a	χ. tsē	χ ts, ts'i	χ ts'o
31 ²	θ ts'e	θ. ts'u	θ. tsī	θ ts'a	θ. tsē	θ ts', ts'i	ɸ ts'o
32	ɻ fe	ɻ. fu	ɻ. fī	ɻ fa	ɻ. fē	ɻ f, fi	ɻ fo
33	T pe	T pu	T pī	T pa	T pē	T p, pi	Z po
34	ñ ve	ñ. vu	ñ. vī	ñ va	ñ. vē	ñ v, vi	ñ vo

COMBINATIONS WITH WA			
3 rd order	4 th order	5 th order	6 th order
ɸ̄ k'wī	ɸ̄ k'wa	ɸ̄ k'wē	ɸ̄ k'wi
χ̄ hwī	χ̄ hwa	χ̄ hwē	χ̄ hwi
h̄ kwī	h̄ kwa	h̄ kwē	h̄ kwi
χ̄ gwī	χ̄ gwa	χ̄ gwē	χ̄ gwi

COMBINATIONS WITH WA			
l̄ lwa	l̄ bwa	l̄ zwa	l̄ t'wa
m̄ mwa	t̄ twa	zh̄ zhwa	ch̄ ch'wa
r̄ rwa	ch̄ chwa		ts̄ ts'wa
s̄ swa	n̄ nwa	d̄ dwa	f̄ fwa
sh̄ shwa	nȳ nywa	j̄ jwa	

COMBINATIONS WITH YA			
rȳ rya	mȳ mya	f̄ fya	ē e

NUMERALS																				
δ̄	ε̄	f̄	ø̄	ɛ̄	z̄	ż̄	ʈ̄	ɳ̄	l̄	ɿ̄	ɻ̄	ɬ̄	ɺ̄	ɻ̄	ɭ̄	ɮ̄	ɱ̄	ɲ̄	ɶ̄	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	20	21	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

NOTES

1. The 6th-order characters should be romanized either with or without the letter **I**, depending on pronunciation.
2. For documentation purposes, the characters romanized with h in rows 1, 3, 13, and 18 may, instead , be romanized with **h**, **h̄**, **h̄̄**, and **h̄̄̄**, respectively; the characters romanized with s in rows 5 and 7 may, instead, be romanized with **š** and **s**, respectively; and the characters romanized with **ts'** in rows 30 and 31 may, instead, be romanized with **ts'** and **ts**, respectively.
3. When the character **¶** in row 14 is known to represent the Amharic word meaning “and” its romanization (**na**) should always be separated from the preceding and following words by spaces and should never be capitalized, e.g., **Raya na K'obo**.
4. The vowel characters in row 16 should be romanized **ā**, **u**, **ī**, **a**, **ē**, **i**, and **o** initially and **'ā**, **'u**, **'ī**, **'a**, **'ē**, **'i**, and **'o** in all other positions.
5. When the character **¶** in row 23 is known to represent the Amharic preposition, its romanization (**Ye**) should be capitalized and written together with the following word, which should also be capitalized, e.g., **YeWiha Shet'**.